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# THE Baptist Record

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JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION SINCE 1877

## BRIEFS

### TENN. BAPTISTS GET \$1.575M ENDOWMENT

BRENTWOOD, Tn. (BP) — The Tennessee Baptist Mission Board has received an anonymous gift of \$1,575,000 to endow the Golden Offering for Tennessee Missions (GOTM). The endowment will generate an estimated \$50,000 or more for GOTM outreach each year, mission board members were informed during their April 25 meeting. Randy C. Davis, the board's president and executive director, noted GOTM has grown more than 15% in the past three years, indicating to him that, "Tennessee Baptists are hearing clearly that any way you slice it Tennessee is a missions field."

### MESSIANIC PASTOR DIES IN IRAQ AUTO ACCIDENT

NORTHERN IRAQ (BP) — Anthony "Tony" Simon, 53, noted evangelist and pastor in Israel, was killed in a pedestrian accident in Iraq on May 29. The Messianic leader was in Iraq to provide aid to locals in the troubled country. Simon led an English-Russian congregation at the Baptist House in Jerusalem. Raised by Jewish parents, Simon did not come to know Christ until his college roommate began to discuss the Bible with him. Simon was able to use his Jewish background to relate to those he ministered to in Israel, where followers of Christ comprise about two percent of the population.

### NO BAPTIST RECORD PUBLISHED JULY 6

JACKSON, Ms. (Special) — Due to postal regulations that limit The Baptist Record to 50 issues per year, the newspaper does not publish on the weeks that contain Independence Day/July 4 and Christmas Day. The Record will therefore not publish on Thursday, July 6. For news items to be published in the issue prior to that on Thursday, Sept. 29, the deadline is Thursday, Sept. 22. The deadline for news items to go in the next available issue (July 13) is July 6. Advertisements for the issue of July 13 must be finalized by Thursday, June 29. Questions? Email wperkins@mbcb.org.

## Earlier Youth Night date a success

### MS Baptist's largest event sets direction for the future

By William H. Perkins Jr.  
Editor

Mississippi Baptist Youth Night, repurposed for 2017, hit its goal of sending Mississippi Baptist young people into the approaching summer of Christian and missions activities rather than providing a wrap-up at the end of summer as in years past.

That's according to Don Lum, evangelism director for the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board and coordinator for the largest annual event on the convention calendar, held June 2 at the Mississippi Coliseum in Jackson.

This year, the emphasis was on blessing the young people involved in mission trips, Vacation Bible School volunteering, summer camp staffers and attendees, and the many other missions activities this summer will bring. In the past, Youth Night has been an occasion toward the end of the summer to rejoice in the success of all those activities before returning to the normal routines of Fall.

see YOUTH NIGHT on p. 9



**PAUSING TO VISIT** — Mike Brister (left), discipleship pastor at First Church, Florence, and chairman of the Mississippi Baptist Youth Night Planning Committee, takes a break in the minutes before the beginning of Youth Night June 2 at the Mississippi Coliseum in Jackson to visit with some of the young people who attended Mississippi Baptists' largest annual event. (Photo courtesy of Don Lum)

## Church bus crash in Georgia claims life

ATLANTA, Ga. (BP and local reports) — One student died and dozens were injured June 8 when the church bus in which they were traveling from Huntsville, Al., to Atlanta to catch a flight for a mission trip to Botswana wrecked on a busy Georgia thoroughfare.



**HARMENING**

Seventeen-year-old Sarah Harming was killed when the bus from Huntsville's Mt. Zion Church, a cooperating member of the Alabama Baptist Convention, crashed into a guardrail and overturned on Camp Creek Parkway in Fulton County. It was apparently a one-vehicle accident.

Television station WXIA in Atlanta reported that four or five people were transported to local hospitals in critical condition, with 10-15 others transported in fair to stable conditions. The Atlanta Journal Constitution newspaper reported a total of 33 injuries, counting minor injuries.

see CRASH on p. 9

## Lottie Moon gifts edge toward \$153M



**ON THE FIELD** — Brian Harrell (left) with the Southern Baptist International Mission Board (IMB) visits with a Makhwa Nahara man in the African nation of Mozambique. (IMB photo)

RICHMOND, Va. (BP/IMB) — The 2016 Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for International Missions (LMCO) has closed at nearly \$153 million — the offering's fourth highest historical total — according to data released June 7 by the Southern Baptist International Mission Board (IMB) in Richmond, Va.

The 2016 LMCO was down 7.7% from the previous year's record of \$167.5 million, and with in one percent of 2014's second-highest-ever \$154 million.

The exact 2016 total, which was released to Baptist Press by IMB, is \$152,982,560.94 — below the \$155 million goal and approximately 6.2% below the IMB's 2017 budget projection of \$163.1 million stated in the 2017 Southern Baptist Con-

see LMCO on p. 9

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## From the editor

WILLIAM PERKINS

### Kathy Who?

If you had not heard the name Kathy Griffin before she held up that bloody pretend severed head of our President, you can be forgiven. Never a real Hollywood heavyweight, she uses her infrequent moments of fame as the only means she has to draw attention to herself. Let's not forget her previous vanities.

At the Emmy Awards in 2007, she managed to insult the whole of Christianity with her offensive remarks about our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. At base, what she said was poor taste at its most poor. In case you missed it, here's the direct quote from Griffin as she accepted the Emmy for best reality program for her Bravo Cable network show, *My Life on the D-List*:

*A lot of people come up here and thank Jesus for this award. I want you to know that no one had less to do with the award than Jesus. \*\*\*\* It, Jesus. This award is my god now.*

Needless to say, the \*\*\*\* notation is a word that cannot be printed in a family newspaper in the context it was used by Griffin. That part of her remarks was edited out of the delayed broadcast that aired on E! cable network, but the uncensored version has been widely available on the Internet and cable talk shows like *Larry King Live*.

A 56-year-old native of the Chicago area, Griffin has not exactly set Hollywood on fire. Even the tongue-in-cheek reference in her show's title to being on the "D-List" refers to her minor standing among show business elites.

Griffin may be better known for her voice work than her talentless acting and minimal comedy careers. She has been the voice in the background for *Vaseline Intensive Care* commercials and a host of other products, as well as providing character voices on *The Simpsons* television series and other shows.

However, Griffin's crowning career achievement seems to be her hosting of the annual GayVN Awards, which recognizes the "best" productions in the field of homosexual adult entertainment.

Stripped of its semantic niceties, that means she is involved in the promotion of pornography.

Like many aging stars -- or, as in Griffin's case, star wannabes -- with careers in free-fall decline, Griffin feels it necessary to say and do outrageous things in an attempt to move the spotlight on to herself. It has worked, if only for a brief time before the American public, ever hungry for new celebrity scandal, moves on.

How sad. Equally as sad, however, was Griffin's flippant defense of her remarks at the Emmys: "Am I the only Catholic left with a sense of humor?"

Does Griffin actually believe she is the one who was wronged? Like many Hollywood types who consider the space between New York City and Los Angeles to be "flyover country," Griffin probably thinks of heartland Christians as backward, poorly educated fundamentalists who aren't hip enough to understand her modern, off-color attempts at humor. That's the way Christian characters are often portrayed to audiences in many Hollywood productions.

Suffice to say, if Griffin had said, "\*\*\*\* it, Muhammad," or "I want you to know that no one had less to do with this award than Buddha," the mainstream news media elites would have been all over her, calling for her firing from *My Life on the D-List* and demanding boycotts of her products.

Christians are fair game, however. Griffin is by no means alone in the American entertainment industry and certain political circles. Her behavior, like most of the rest of Hollywood's behavior, is nothing less than a strong indication of the impact Christians have, and seek to have, as we stand against the sinful elements of our larger culture.

People like Griffin don't like the sound of that. Many Hollywood elitists and politicians are plainly upset about it. They have targeted us for many years, and will continue to do so for many more years.

May we be strong enough to withstand their slurs and humiliations, and still keep our focus on Jesus (Matthew 28:18-20). After what He did for us, it's the least we can do in return.

## The Father-Child Prayer Connect

### Prayer: A Father's Embrace

So many girls pride themselves in being "Daddy's Little Girl." Our daughter has always had an incredible love connection with her dad. When she was small, she would run as fast as she could into the arms of her daddy every morning. As she began the sprint she would scream, "Daddy, I love you! I love you! You're the best daddy in the whole wide world!" So it is with our Heavenly Father. He wants us to awaken every day and run into His arms, telling Him how much we love Him. Our motive for this expression of love is solely to express our heartfelt love for Him. As we pray, we release all our love for the Lord God and we feel His unconditional love for us. Do you need to feel authentically loved? How long has it been since you ran to the Lord to adore Him and let Him love you? Start your day with prayer in the strong arms of a loving Father (Romans 8:38-39). Pray that your first mission every day will be to love and be loved by Him.



### The Softer Side

with Cindy Townsend

Of these words: Why? What? When? Where? How? Who? The questions were endless and amusing. Are we not the same way when we approach our Heavenly Father in prayer? Father, why is this happening right now? Father, who is going to be there to help me? Father, how am I going to make it through this? Prayer helps us gain His wisdom and become encouraged deep within our soul. Jesus often answers our questions with two wise words: Trust Me. When overwhelming questions fill our lives, we are called to pray and listen intently for His wise counsel (Matthew 7:7). Pray for His wise counsel to strengthen you.

### Prayer: A Father's Perspective

Attending a big parade complete with floats and marching bands fills the heart of every child with sheer joy. Can you imagine a little child's frustration when his/her view of the parade is blocked by the big people standing in front of her? A caring father can save the day by lifting up his little child to his shoulders to help him/her see above the crowd. Prayer can help us overcome barriers in our lives that obscure our view. The struggles of life can block our view. Prayer can lift us up and help us gain God's perspective on the problems. As we pray, we can see with clearer vision, attain powerful insight, and experience a mighty transformation within our spirit. Allowing God to lift us above our circumstances helps us view our life through His eyes. From the pinnacle of prayer, our worries, anxieties, passions, motives, career, family, troubles, and challenges find their true proportion. When we gain the perspective of our Heavenly Father, our spirits are renewed to face the challenges of life with confidence (1 John 5:14-15). Pray for eyes to see His perspective in every situation of life.

### Prayer: A Father's Presence

A little child feels so secure in the presence of his/her father. He/She knows his/her dad is there to protect, love, and care for their every need. Even though our earthly father desires to care for us at all times, he is physically limited to a specific place and time. How wonderful to know we are never outside the presence of our Heavenly Father wherever we are. In the midst of our daily routine, we can call His name and He hears us. Being in conversation with God throughout the day brings an awareness of His presence and power. Practice His presence through continual prayer. You will develop an intimacy in your relationship with Him that will be life sustaining. (1 Thessalonians 5:17) Pray for a continual awareness of the presence of the Lord.

Happy Father's Day!

Townsend is executive director-treasurer of the Mississippi Woman's Missionary Union/Women's Ministries auxiliary to the Mississippi Baptist Convention. She may be contacted at [ctownsend@mbcb.org](mailto:ctownsend@mbcb.org).

### Prayer: A Father's Wisdom

When my children were young, they were full of questions that always began with one

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### BAPTISTS

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# LifeWay Research exposes America's big cultural fears

NASHVILLE (BP) — Many Americans are more worried about their reputation than their conscience, a new LifeWay Research study shows. They also worry less about guilt and fear and more about avoiding shame, according to the study.

LifeWay Research is a Nashville-based, evangelical research firm that specializes in surveys about faith in culture and matters that affect churches. It is associated with LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention, also headquartered in Nashville.

Shame has become particularly powerful in American culture in the Internet age, said Scott McConnell, executive director of LifeWay Research, who added that a single mistake or embarrassing moment posted on social media can ruin a person's life.

"What's our biggest cultural fear? Shame," McConnell pointed out. "What's surprising is not that personal freedom, ambition, and doing the right thing are valued by Americans. It's that risk to our reputation is what matters most."

## Mixed motivations

Shaming has been a part of American life at least since the days of the novel, *The Scarlet Letter*, written in 1850 by Nathaniel Hawthorne. Set among the Puritans, the novel tells the story of Hester Prynne, a young mother forced to wear a scarlet "A" after committing adultery, considered a crime at the time.

Since then, Americans have been more concerned about issues like guilt over wrongdoing, McConnell said. That's shaped how churches have presented their faith to the public, he observed.

McConnell said LifeWay Research wanted to know if guilt is still a major issue for Americans, because that might affect how Christians talk about their faith since Christianity also addresses

needs such as shame and fear.

"We wanted to know, are churches addressing the issues Americans care about most?" he said.

Researchers asked 1,000 Americans three questions to discover their feelings about fear, shame, guilt, and other issues.

■ Which of these feelings do you seek to avoid the most?

■ Which of these desires is strongest in your life?

■ Which of these directions do you value the most?

Thirty-eight percent of Americans say they avoid shame the most. Thirty-one percent say guilt, while 30% say fear.

Education and age play a role in what feelings Americans avoid. Those with graduate degrees (44%) are more likely to avoid shame than those with high school diplomas or less (34%). Americans ages 25-34 avoid guilt (37%) more than those age 55 and older (27%). Middle-aged Americans, those ages 35-54, are the most likely age group to worry about shame at 44%.

"Nones," or those who claim no religious identity avoid guilt (35%) more than those who are religious (30%). Those who are religious avoid shame (39%) more than nones (33%). Those from non-Christian faiths are most likely to avoid shame (48%).

McConnell wonders whether Americans see shame as a bigger threat to their reputations or self-worth than guilt. "Guilt says, 'I deserve to be punished,'" he said, "but shame says, 'I am worthless.'"

## Personal freedom

LifeWay Research found Americans still prize independence. When asked to name what they desire most from a list of options, 40% name personal freedom. Thirty-one percent say respect, while 28% say they desire to overcome.

Men (44%) are more likely to choose personal freedom than

Among Americans:

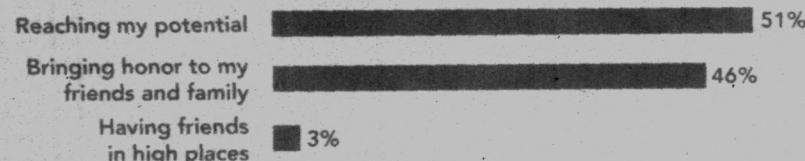
Which of these feelings do you seek to avoid the most?



Which of these desires is the strongest in your life?



Which of these directions do you value the most?



Note: Some totals do not equal 100% due to rounding

LifeWay

LifeWay Research.com

women (37%). The nones are more likely to choose personal freedom (50%) than Christians (38%). Personal freedom also matters most for those ages 18-24 (51%).

The more Americans attend religious services, the less they value personal freedom. Among those who attend services less than once a month, 44% value personal freedom most. That drops to 36% for those who attend more than once a month.

Americans without evangelical beliefs (42%) are also more likely to value personal freedom than those with evangelical beliefs (32%).

The desire to overcome, the study shows, matters more to Hispanic Americans (37%) than to white Americans (25%). Those from non-Christian faiths (40%) value overcoming more than Christians (27%).

Christians (35 percent) were more likely to desire respect than nones (21%) and those from non-Christian faiths (22%).

## Making Mom proud

Some of the most interesting findings came when researchers asked Americans, "Which of these directions do you value most?" McConnell said. Their options:

■ Reaching my potential  
■ Bringing honor to family and friends  
■ Having friends in high places

Almost no one (three percent) chose having friends in high places. Instead, Americans were split almost down the middle between reaching their potential (51%) and bringing honor to family and friends (46%).

McConnell sees a link between the two. Americans are ambitious, he said, but it's not always ambition for its own sake. "We want the people we love to be proud of us. Few of us want to let our family and friends down."

Among other findings, those with a graduate degree (57%) value reaching their potential

more than those who are high school graduates or less (47%). Nones (63%) value reaching their potential more than Christians (46 percent). Those without evangelical beliefs (53%) value reaching their potential more than those with evangelical beliefs (42%).

Christians (52%) value bringing honor to family and friends more than nones (33%). Those who attend a religious service once a month or more (56%) value bringing honor to family and friends more than those who attend less than once a month (42%).

McConnell is skeptical of one finding in the survey — the idea few Americans value having friends in high places. He wonders whether some Americans are ashamed to admit they want to be well connected.

Perhaps, he said, making Mom proud is more powerful than having rich friends. "We all want to be appreciated by the ones we love."

# Proposal assists genocide victims in Iraq, Syria

WASHINGTON (BP) — The U.S. House of Representatives approved legislation June 6 to assist Christians and other survivors of genocide committed by the Islamic State (IS) and bring the perpetrators to justice.

The House in a voice vote passed without opposition the Iraq and Syria Genocide Emergency Relief and Accountability Act (H.R. 390), which still

requires U.S. Senate approval before going to U.S. President Donald Trump, would provide humanitarian aid to Christians, Yazidis, Shia Muslims, and other religious and ethnic minorities in the two Middle East countries.

The legislation would also would promote criminal investigations and prosecutions of terrorists responsible for genocidal acts and crimes against humanity.

The Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission (ERLC) in Nashville is working for the proposal's enactment.

"When it comes to the murderous slaughter of the innocent throughout the Middle East, we cannot show moral indifference," ERLC President Russell Moore told Baptist Press in written comments. "Some of the areas in which the Christian

faith was born are now killing fields."

"History has shown us that when the United States does not act, religious freedom becomes imperiled, so I hope the Senate will act swiftly to expedite this bill in its chamber."

Non-profit organizations have provided humanitarian assistance to Iraqis and Syrians displaced and otherwise victim-

ized by IS but the United States government has yet to do so, said Rep. Chris Smith (R-N.J.), chief sponsor of the measure.

In March 2016, then-U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry designated the terrorist campaign by IS as genocide. No IS member has been tried for genocide, crimes against humanity, or war crimes since then, religious freedom advocates said in March.

This coming Sunday is designated as Father's Day. While it may not be as big a day in the lives of kids or families as Mother's Day, it is still significant in that one of the cornerstones of a person's life being meaningful and productive is based on the fact that they are to honor their father and their mother. When the Ten Commandments were given by God to Moses, in the center of the list is, "Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee" (Exod. 20:12).

I've often thought if you were to list the commandments in order of their real significance, of course you would have to put the opening commandments as really vital and significant — those significant laws that have to do with honoring God and not putting anything before Him. Then you would list commandments like, "Remember the Sabbath day," or "Honor thy father," those weighty moments like, "Thou shalt not kill," "Thou shalt not commit adultery," "Thou shalt not steal or bear false witness." Those really get our attention, but "Honor thy father," not so much. Although the commandment begins with the word honor, which is in itself a heavy, significant word for us to digest, that word is not just referring to one day a year when you have Father's Day and get him a new pair of socks. It is talking about an attitude, a deep sense of respect, that will guide your life and your relationship and the shaping of your days by the way you honor, respect, appreciate, and see the worth and value in your father's life.

In our culture today far too many have just forgotten this commandment, and yet it is one of the most significant, life-changing, and life-giving commandments in the list. The way you view and subsequently treat and relate to your mother and father sets in motion a pattern that more than likely will flow into the life of your offspring and potentially their offspring. There's an interesting old story about a grandpa who was fishing on the creek bank with his grandson. They were enjoying one another's company and the old granddad said, "Boy, if you'll take care of me when I get old, I will take care of you



## Honor Thy Father

when you get old." The young boy had no way at all of understanding or processing that thought. Some of you reading this article may not understand or be able to process that thought. What the granddad was saying to his young grandson was if you will develop an attitude of care and respect and appreciation for me, that will go on with you to the point that the people around your life will probably be affected and infected by it and they will be there to care for you just like you care for me.

The first idea is the fact that this is a dual command, "Honor thy father and thy mother." You may think your mother is a wonderful, loving person and your dad is kind of a harsh, mean old dude (or vice versa). You still aren't given the option of loving one and disrespecting the other. They were husband and wife. They were the unit of reproduction that gave you existence and in more cases than not, provided care and love and support to the best of their ability, and made input into your life to the degree that they were able. They deserve your respect. Both of them. Don't pretend to respect. Genuinely honor them and if you don't, more people than you think will be observing that you do not. Care for your parents, not for other folks' sake but for your sake.

The second idea is to look at the fuel of this commandment. What do I mean by that? There are several things to

which you need to give attention for this commandment to take on genuine meaning in your life. One of the components of the fuel is that this is a spiritual aspect of your life. God gave this command and while sometimes you may obey your parents simply because you have to, at some point maturity in your walk with the Lord will enable you to see that living out, honoring, and respecting your parents brings about a new dimension in your own life. Notice too that this command is fueled by a wonderful promise that hangs before us like the promise that you cannot embrace without embracing respect and honor for your parents. It says, "Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee." Some people simply see that as surface thinking. You do what your parents tell you to do and you will live long. That may have some reality to it because what they are telling you is probably things that would be best for you if you would listen to them.

Through the years I have watched so many people spend their entire lives bucking up against their parents, fussing, fighting against their opinions, their care, their love, only to transfer that to the next level and the next level, into one area after another, never understanding that life could be so much better, so much more pleasant if they had learned the lessons of

having a gentle, clear, obedient, respectful heart from childhood on. The fuel is significant because it all centers in a life of caring, attentive respect.

The third and final idea about which I would like for you to think for a moment on this Father's Day, is what I believe is inherent in it is a wonderful command that has renewal built in. For that, I am extremely grateful. Was there ever a time when I disobeyed my parents? Absolutely. Was there a time when I may not have had the respect that I should have had for them? Yes, but I must confess and share my joy in the fact that I learned long, long ago that while I did not have a perfect mom and dad, they were great people in their own right. They did more for me than they should have done. They were more gracious and forgiving than I ever realized, and at every turn in every way of every day, they truly wanted the best for me.

Coming to understand that fact decades ago has brought joy to my life again and again. My father and my mother have long since gone on to be with our Father in heaven, but every memory of any kindness in my life shown toward them has grown multiple times as the years have gone by. A card I gave to my mom or some special thing I did for my dad has come back to me, not only in the blessings of my own children or grandchildren but also in memories of, "I'm so glad that I did that. I'm so glad that I went the second mile. I'm so thankful that they loved me through the dark days and were with me during the glorious days."

Truthfully, as far as day-to-day living is concerned, this commandment probably has more significance to make a difference in your home, life, children, and grandchildren than any other one thing you could do. More than making a good living, more than seeing that they get on the right team, more than graduating at the right school, honoring your father and mother in life and in death is a God-honoring, significant thing. Honor your father and your mother. God bless you.

The author can be contacted at [directions@mbcb.org](mailto:directions@mbcb.org).

## Vacation Bible School



TOOMSUBA CHURCH, TOOMSUBA: June 4 - 7; shown with participants is pastor Steven Wade. Ashley Harrington, director.



DESOTO CHURCH, SHUBUTA: Shown are the VBS participants.

## College News

► Mississippi College is hosting a Music Camp June 25 - 30. Deadline to sign up is June 23. Cost, \$500. For information, call Dottie Serio at (601) 925-3440 or [Serio@mc.edu](mailto:Serio@mc.edu).

## Homecomings



MONT ROSE CHURCH, QUITMAN celebrated homecoming May 22 with guest speaker Calvin Hays. There was also a groundbreaking held for a new fellowship hall to begin construction in July. Pictured with shovel is John Roy Moore, longest attending member of the church.



# SCOTUS turns away religious liberty appeal

WASHINGTON (BP) — The U.S. Supreme Court missed an opportunity to clarify religious liberty law when they turned away a former Marine's appeal.

Family Research Council (FRC) representative Travis Weber said.

The court on June 5 declined to hear the appeal of former Lance Corporal Monifa Sterling, discharged in 2013 for bad conduct after she refused to remove displays of Isaiah 54:17 from her workstation.

The court passed up an opportunity to clarify the Religious Liberty Restoration Act (RFRA)

that Sterling had used unsuccessfully in her defense, said Weber, a former naval aviator who directs the FRC's Center for Religious Liberty.

"The Court should have taken the opportunity to clarify that RFRA protects religious expression in the military such as what is at issue in this case. Unfortunately, that must wait until another day," Weber said June 5th in a FRC press release.

"In the meantime, we must hope that leaving this ruling in place is not interpreted by anyone as permission to continue to scrub religious expression from our military," he added.

First Liberty Institute began representing Sterling in 2016, appealing her case before the military's highest court, the Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces

(CAAF). Defeated there, First Liberty appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court on Dec. 23, 2016.

"Since the Supreme Court did not decide to review the case, the travesty below by the Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces will now stand," said First Liberty President and CEO Kelly Shackelford.

"The military court's outrageous decision means federal judges and military officials can strip our service members of their constitutional rights just because they don't think someone's religious beliefs are important enough to be protected. Our service members deserve better," he said.

Shackelford vowed to continue fighting for religious liberty of U.S. service members. "We will now work even harder to

ensure our nation's brave service members do not lose their religious freedom. We will continue the fight for religious liberty in the armed forces through other matters and through legislative efforts."

Sterling had used RFRA and First Amendment rights to religious expression in her defense, but the Navy Marine Corps Court of Criminal Appeals said RFRA did not apply. Sharing Bible verses does not constitute religious exercise as a "part of a religious system of belief," the court said in its August 2016 ruling.

As a result of her discharge after being reduced to the lowest military rank, Sterling has experienced "great financial hardship," First Liberty said, and might have difficulty receiving veterans' benefits.

Sterling's fight began at Camp Lejeune in Jacksonville, N.C., in May of 2013, when her supervisor and drill sergeant ordered her to remove the personalized versions of Isaiah 54:17 from her work area. The supervisor said she didn't "like the tone" of the often-quoted, "No weapon formed against you shall prosper."

Sterling persisted in reposting the Scripture after someone put them in the trash, First Liberty said, and was court-martialed shortly thereafter.

Despite Sterling's support from religious liberty advocates, former U.S. Army chief of chaplains Douglas Carver advised her supporters in 2015 to reserve judgment. Likely, he told Baptist Press, there was more to Sterling's story than the right to post Scripture at her workstation.

STERLING



## Christian denied treatment, dies in Muslim Pakistan

UMERKOT CITY, Pakistan (BP and local reports) — A Christian sanitation worker in Pakistan whom Muslim doctors declared "unclean" and refused to treat during Ramadan died June 1 from injuries suffered on his job, Morning Star News reported.

Irfan Masih died of exposure to poisonous gas while trying to clear a sewage line, Morning Star said.

Doctors at Umerkot Civil Hospital refused to treat him during the Muslim holy month of Ramadan because the sewerage that dirtied him during the manhole accident made him "unclean" and untouchable, Masih's brother Baba Masih told Morning Star.



MASIH

The death comes as the Parliament in the majority Muslim country considers amending the 26-year-old "Respect for Ramadan" law to increase penalties against those who break the fast that is a major part of the observance, the Australian Broadcasting Corp. reported June 3.

Christians often face danger being minorities in majority Muslim countries during the month considered holy in Islam, according to a Mission Network News report during the 2016 observance of Ramadan.

Mike Edens, a New Orleans Seminary dean who served among Muslims in the Middle East for 27 years, described the report of Masih's death as odd. "I cannot remember hearing of such an event

being attributed to the fast, but there could be many reasons for lack of reporting or my not hearing of such happening," Edens said.

More accurately, Edens said, the worker may have been refused treatment because of "tribal and sectarian barriers amplified by Ramadan observance."

"Muslims are encouraged to focus their energies and thoughts on God during Ramadan... When thinking about the creator, professional medical doctors should be helping those around them."

Christians in Pakistan are typically confined to "tribal" life by a discriminatory and sectarian caste system. Only 75 Christian families live in Umerkot, and all of them are employed as sanitation workers by the Umerkot Municipal Committee, World Watch Monitor (WWM) reported June 5.

Sources that WWM described as "experts on Pakistan" also said Masih's mistreatment had more to do with a "legacy of the Indian caste system than Islamic theology about how the Ramadan fast could be invalidated by certain 'retrictions' on the [one fasting]," WWM wrote. In 1947, the dominant power in the region, Great Britain, partitioned India and allowed the country of Pakistan to be formed, thus the Indian influence that remains in the country.

Masih's family protested his death, carrying his body from the hospital to the Umerkot Press Club and demonstrating for about 10 hours, Morning Star reported. The Pakistan Medical Association held a counter protest when three doctors named in the case were charged with criminal negligence and manslaughter.

LIFEWAY'S



GEARING UP FOR LIFE'S BIG GAME  
2 PETER 1:3

## LifeWay announces new 2018 Vacation Bible School theme

NASHVILLE (BP and local reports) — As Vacation Bible Schools ramp up throughout the Southern Baptist Convention and fans across the nation followed the National Basketball Association and National Hockey League finals this week, LifeWay Christian Resources announced "Game On!" as its 2018 Vacation Bible School (VBS) theme.

Game On! is designed to help kids gear up for life's big game by teaching them Jesus has provided all they need for the journey to which God calls them, LifeWay VBS specialist Melita Thomas said.

"Kids are under so much pressure — to perform well, to be the best, to balance schedules that are full to the brim, to excel in every arena," she said. "From

that vantage point, life's big game can seem like no fun but when we step back, we realize the goal is not competing in our own strength. God has already given us everything we need."

Game On! was announced June 5 via a Facebook Live reveal party hosted by LifeWay. The video garnered more than 35,000 views in less than a day and was shared 543 times.

"What's impressive about those numbers is they show so many dedicated VBS workers will take time in the middle of the day — many of them on day one of this year's VBS — to look forward to what's in store for the next year of ministry," Thomas said.

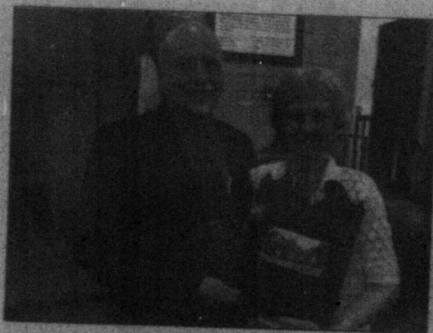
On each day of next year's VBS, students will learn a way Jesus equips His followers. The

lessons will contain the Gospel message and will revolve around the key verse of 2 Peter 1:3: "His divine power has given us everything required for life and godliness through the knowledge of him who called us by His own glory and goodness."

VBS remains a strategic evangelism tool for many churches. LifeWay's VBS alone serves more than 25,000 churches reaching more than three million children. Thomas believes 2018's theme will see the trend continue as Game On! teaches kids how to aim for what really matters now and for eternity.

"Game On! is so much more than a sports theme," Thomas said. "It's about meeting people where they are and equipping them for life — the big game."

## Just for the Record



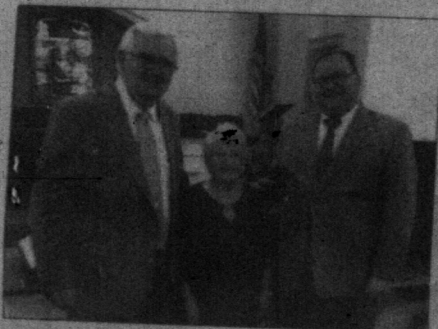
**BETHEL CHURCH, NEWTON COUNTY**, honored Marilyn Bethune for 50 years of service. She is the widow of former pastor John Harold Bethune. She served in music ministry, teaching, missions, jail ministry, as an encourager, and prayer warrior.



**FRIENDSHIP CHURCH, MCCOMB**, honored Julia Lee White as the oldest mother and member of the church on May 14. She was also honored by The Enterprise Journal as the 2017 mother of the year.



**POPLAR SPRINGS CHURCH, MENDENHALL**, recognized Ted Bowlin and family for ten years of pastoral ministry. The church held a special luncheon and presented the family with gifts and cards of appreciation. Shown are Anna, Isaac, Ted, Stephanie, Leah, Noah, and Anna Bowlin.



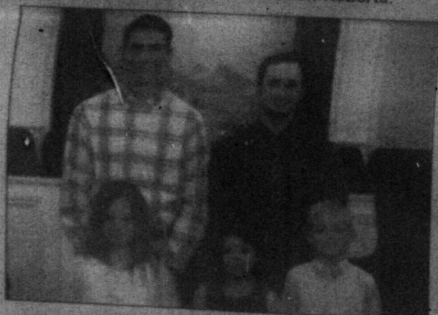
**BASSFIELD CHURCH, BASSFIELD**, ordained Grady Aultman as deacon. Shown are Aultman, Sandra Aultman, and Ken Roberts.



**LIBERTY HILL CHURCH, POPE**, sponsored a women's conference. Guest speaker Beth Fitts is shown with pastor Derrick Simmons.



**NEW LIBERTY, TISHOMINGO**, recently honored its high school graduates. Shown are Skylor Dill, Baileigh Johnson, Aveline Morris, Lydia Kennedy, and Eli Adams.



**BRANCH CHURCH, MORTON**, recognizes its graduates: Austin Shoemaker, College; Hunter Ragan, High School; Elizabeth Bates, Gracelynn White & Landon Smith, Kindergarten.



**DOUBLE SPRINGS CHURCH, MABEN**, ordained Jason Bridges to the gospel ministry May 21. Shown are Bridges and his wife Jennifer.



Janet Holland retired as Weekday Preschool Director from **FIRST CHURCH, VICKSBURG**, after 25 years of service. Shown are Ashton Thompson, Catherine McComar, Holland, and pastor Matt Buckles.



**CALHOUN CHURCH, HOT COFFEE**, honored graduate Corlee Gentry of Collins. Pastor Daryl Coats is shown presenting her with a KJV Woman's Study Bible.



Philip Jordan was recently licensed to the Gospel ministry by **WILLIAMSVILLE CHURCH, KOSCIUSKO**. Shown are Jordan and pastor Junior Davis.



**MOUNT VERNON, LAUDERDALE ASSOCIATION**, recently held baby dedications for Selah Christine Smith and Lydia Josephine Mooney. Shown are Troy Smith, Jayme Smith, Selah Smith, Paul Tröpper, Pastor; Lydia Mooney, Kyleigh Mooney, and Billy Mooney.



## Just for the Record



**CROSS ROADS CHURCH, PELAHATCHIE**, recently held a GA - RA end of year celebration.



The WMU of **HARMONY CHURCH, WINSTON COUNTY ASSOCIATION**, sponsored a painting party May 13.



A baby/child dedication was held on Mother's Day at **ETHEL CHURCH, ATTALA COUNTY**. Those participating (l-r) are Ralph Hunt, Luke Nail, holding Aden Thomas Nail, Nikki Nail, holding Keeli Grace Nail and standing in front, Alana Renee Nail. Also, Beau and Jamie Varner, holding John Owen Varner and standing in front, Addison Craft Varner.

The Rubies of **MARS HILL CHURCH, PETAL**, gathered for a mother/daughter devotion, lunch, and games May 7.



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# Corrections chaplains, volunteers gather together in Flowood

By Roscoe Barnes  
Correspondent

More than 50 chaplains and volunteers attended the Mississippi Department of Corrections (MDOC) State Chaplains Meeting hosted in March by the Flowood Restitution Center (FRC) in Flowood.

The meeting focused on the plans for the "Tell Me" rallies being held across the state by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB), and updates on the Technical Violation Centers (TVC) with a look at their goals and curriculum. Discussions also included MDOC policies and procedures.

The Tell Me rallies are part of Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB) "Tell Someone 2017" campaign. Their purpose was to help people share their personal stories of faith by encouraging them to tell someone what Jesus has done for them, according to Don Gann, director of Men's Ministry and disaster relief coordinator for MBCB. He is also coordinator of Chaplaincy Ministries for MBCB.

The meeting was organized by Flowood chaplain Gwen McClinton and MDOC director of religious programs, chaplain Eugene Wigelsworth. According to Wigelsworth, MBCB volunteers want to make a difference.

"They want to come in and minister in a way that you think is best," he told the audience of chaplains. "I believe there are offenders who want to share their faith. Some of the best evangelists are wearing stripes."

The meeting opened with prayer by Kemper/Neshoba County regional chaplain Barry Rush.

Washington County regional chaplain Regina Leavy provided the devotion. She encouraged the audience to "remain proactive in prayer, fasting, reading, and studying the Word of God." Using the story of Samson as a theme, she urged everyone to not become spiritually insensitive.

"To stay relevant to our culture we must act and live by the Word of God," Leavy said.

She was followed by Gann, who spoke about the rallies. "We want to not only evangelize, but to mobilize and inspire the Baptists of our state," he said. "I'm interested in evangelism and spiritual growth, but I want you to have many volunteers that can be helpful to your ministry."



**CHAPLAINS TOGETHER** — Chaplains, volunteers, and state officials attending the Mississippi Department of Corrections State Chaplain Meeting hosted by the Flowood Restitution Center in Flowood included Pat Owen, Gwen McClinton, Christy Gutherz, Eugene Wigelsworth, Regina Leavy, Don Gann, and Darryl Rush. (Photo courtesy of Lisa Spinks-O'Hara)

"I believe there are offenders who want to share their faith. Some of the best evangelists are wearing stripes."

**Eugene Wigelsworth**

**MDOC director of religious programs**

MBCB volunteers have completed Tell Me rallies in all 82 counties in Mississippi. Gann said MBCB executive director-treasurer Jim Futral spoke at all of the rallies. Futral, he said, "loves inmates and he loves prison ministry."

MDOC director of treatment Pat Owen offered praise for the work of the attendees: "Thank you for what you do. We would have tons of problems in the area of religious programs if you did not do your jobs."

MDOC deputy commissioner for community corrections Christy Gutherz echoed Owen's sentiments. "I want to express my gratitude to you for coming and for the volunteers who come week after week," she said. "I thank you for what you do and I pray for your safety and your ministry."

Roy and Mary Callahan of Hands Up Outreach talked about their work as missionaries with Rankin Association. They described their discipleship and anger management programs for women offenders, as well as their participa-

tion in art therapy and Bible studies with male offenders.

They have served for several years in FRC and Central Mississippi Correctional Facility (CMCF) in Rankin County.

Attendees also heard the testimony of Vicki Demoney, executive director of Crossroads Ministries in Brandon.

Barbara Binkley of Flowood, Trishelle Johnson of Simpson County, and Beatrice Smith of Leflore County discussed the operations of TVCs in their areas. They shared their personal experiences and the goals of the TVC program.

Other speakers included South Mississippi Correctional Facility chaplain Kenneth Powell and MDOC deputy administrator Audrey McAfee.

McClinton and her staff of volunteers provided a meal for the attendees. Flowood deputy warden Lisa Spinks-O'Hara said she was "honored to support the event." She said the Flowood center has "a lot going on."

McClinton added, "It was a blessing to have the opportunity to host all of the chaplains from MDOC from all over the state of Mississippi. We have a good working relationship due to our leadership, chaplain Eugene Wigelsworth, and these training and educational meetings."

*Barnes is chaplain at the Wilkinson County Correctional Facility in Woodville. Edited for style.*

## BIBL i O C i P H E R

BN UPIWTG, LWXRW VPKT IWTB BT,

XH VGTPITG IWPC PAA; PCS CD BPC

XH PQAT ID EAJRZ IWTB DJI DU BN

UPIWTG'H WPCS.

YDWC ITC: ILTCIN-CXCT

Clue: U = F

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Luke 10:20

By Charles Marx, 1932-2004, © 2005

## MS POSITIONS

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## CRASH

cont. from p. 1

One of the first to arrive at Grady Memorial Hospital in downtown Atlanta was Terry Slay, adult education minister at Mt. Zion Church. Holding a list of mission trip participants in one hand and his cell phone in the other, Slay worked feverishly to identify where individuals had been taken to Grady, what their conditions were, and whether family members had yet arrived. He was granted access to the Grady trauma rooms to pray with and encourage the injured.

At Atlanta Medical Center South, Austin McBride, student ministry intern who had been on the bus, met in a separate room with family members and friends to update them on the status of those injured.

When the bus crashed, McBride reportedly helped get students off the bus, tending to their injuries until emergency responders arrived.

Within hours, those with less serious injuries were released from the hospital as some parents were still arriving. The students who were released were desperate to know about their friends.

One young man, limping and with his arm in a sling, walked silently through the waiting room of Atlanta Medical Center South, his parents walking nearby. His eyes barely blinked. Shock etched his face. He was going to be OK physically, but he wanted to go back to the trauma rooms to check on a friend.

Recent high school graduate Allison Thrasher was asleep when the bus crashed. Sitting toward the back of the bus, she crawled through a shattered window onto the pavement. Her seatmate had to be helped off the bus.

Thrasher suffered a fractured wrist and a knot on her head. She had been released, but her mind wouldn't release the names of her friends on the bus.

Thrasher's grandmother, Kathy Lankford, a member of Southside Church, was out of town when she and her husband got word of the crash. Because they were in Chattanooga, they were able to get to Grady Memorial Hospital quickly.

Giving a big hug to her granddaughter, Lankford said, "Thank you, Lord, for keeping Allison safe." She and her husband said, "Let's pray for everyone else."

Harmening's mother said in the minutes before losing her life, Sarah wrote in her journal recovered from the bus, "I prayed."

## YOUTH NIGHT

cont. from p. 1

"Later in the summer was good, but we wanted to try for the beginning of summer and see how the change of dates was accepted. I heard a lot of feedback, including, 'This is just what my kids needed,' from the adults who accompanied their young people to Youth Night."

Lum said Youth Night this year yielded 92 decisions for Christ, including 42 professions of faith, 27 rededications, and a number of calls to ministry and other decisions.

Featured speaker for Youth Night this year was Brian Mills, college pastor at multicampus Cross Church in northwestern Arkansas. Worship was led by the Josh Maze Band from Highpoint Church in Memphis. Maze, a native Mississippian, is creative and worship pastor at Highpoint Church.

"The focus as always was to share the Gospel message of salvation in Jesus Christ. Youth Night challenges young people to be on mission for Christ — to be ambassadors representing Jesus," Lum pointed out.

"The focus as always was to share the Gospel message of salvation in Jesus Christ. Youth Night challenges young people to be on mission for Christ — to be ambassadors representing Jesus."

Don Lum

evangelism director for the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

"The really good youth programs in our churches across the state take advantage of special events like Youth Night to help establish what I call 'center posts' that will help anchor their young people throughout the year and spur them on to an ever-deeper commitment to Jesus," he said.

Lum thanked the event's planning committee for their hard work in putting together Youth Night for 2017: Mike Brister (chairman), First Church, Florence; Danny Forrest, First Church, Rich-ton; Jeff Byrd, First Church Fannin, Brandon; and Andy Mullins, McLaurin Heights Church, Pearl.

Lum also expressed appreciation for the Mississippi Baptists who support Youth Night each year by participat-

ing in the Cooperative Program. "The Cooperative Program funds 100% of Youth Night," he pointed out.

Mississippi Baptist Youth Night 2018 will be held on June 1 at the Mississippi Coliseum in Jackson. For more information on the Youth Night ministry, contact Lum at P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Telephone: (601) 292-3278 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651, ext. 278. E-mail: dlum@mbcb.org. Web site: mbcb.org.

*Editor's note: A love offering was taken at Youth Night, 100% of which will be used to fund youth missions activities in Mississippi Baptist churches. To apply for funding, contact Lum using the information listed above.*

## Submission Guidelines

The Baptist Record is pleased to publish news and photographs of special events that take place in cooperating churches of the Mississippi Baptist Convention. News items and/or photographs depicting benefits and activities for secular or outside organizations will not be published.

Preferred method: news may be submitted electronically to the e-mail address below, and must be included in the message segment of an e-mail form. Secondary method: news may be typewritten or neatly printed on 8 1/2 by 11-inch paper and mailed. All articles must be received in writing; no articles will be accepted over the telephone. Due to ever-present virus threats, no text attachments will be accepted. Photograph attachments in JPEG format are permissible.

Please make articles concise. Include the who, what, when, where details of the story, along with a contact person's address and telephone number.

Photographs must be submitted electronically via e-mail, as attachments in JPEG format. **Hard copy photographs mailed through the postal service will not be accepted.** Photographs must be clear, sharp, and well-lit. Photographs must depict people. No landscape, building, or object-only photographs will be printed. Photographs containing inappropriate gestures and objectionable clothing will not be published. Cell phone photographs and other low resolution items that do not reproduce well on newsprint are generally not publishable.

There is no guarantee that news items and/or photographs will be published, and unsolicited material will not be acknowledged or returned. All news items are subject to editing, and all photographs are subject to cropping. News items and/or photographs can be published one time only. Deadline for submitting news is one week prior to requested publication date. Articles that are not date-sensitive will be published on a space-available basis. These guidelines are not meant to be exhaustive.

Submit news to The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. FAX: (601) 292-3330. E-mail: baptistrecord@mbcb.org.

## LMCO

cont. from p. 1

vention (SBC) Book of Reports.

The LMCO campaign year is not equivalent to IMB's fiscal year, which contributes to slight differences between campaign totals and budget estimates.

Every dollar given to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering (LMCO) supports nearly 3,600 Southern Baptist personnel on the mission field, sent by their local churches to evangelize, disciple, plant, and multiply healthy churches and train leaders among unreached peoples and places for the glory of God.

"As we consider billions of people who have yet to hear the Gospel, we as Southern Baptists realize the best way we can play our part in fulfilling the Great Commission is through cooperative effort in praying, giving, going, and sending," said IMB President David Platt.

"Thank you, Southern Baptists, for giving to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering to support a growing mission force working to make disciples and multiply churches around the world. Through the generosity of every single Southern Baptist who gave, the grace of God is resounding to the glory of God among more and more people and peoples."

The Harrell family is one example of how Southern Baptists' gifts support international missions. The family lives on the edge of Mozambique's coastal waters, solely to reach the 300,000 Makhuwa Nahara people with the Gospel.

Another example is Nick and Shannan Copland, who use modern tools to meet people and forge relationships in the ancient Italian city of Verona. The gifts also provide a way for IMB missionaries Rodney and Helen Clegg (not their real names) to help lead prostitutes away from their lifestyle in a notorious South Asian red-light district by sharing the hope of the Gospel.

## Truth is not relative.

Find it in the One who is the way, truth, and life.

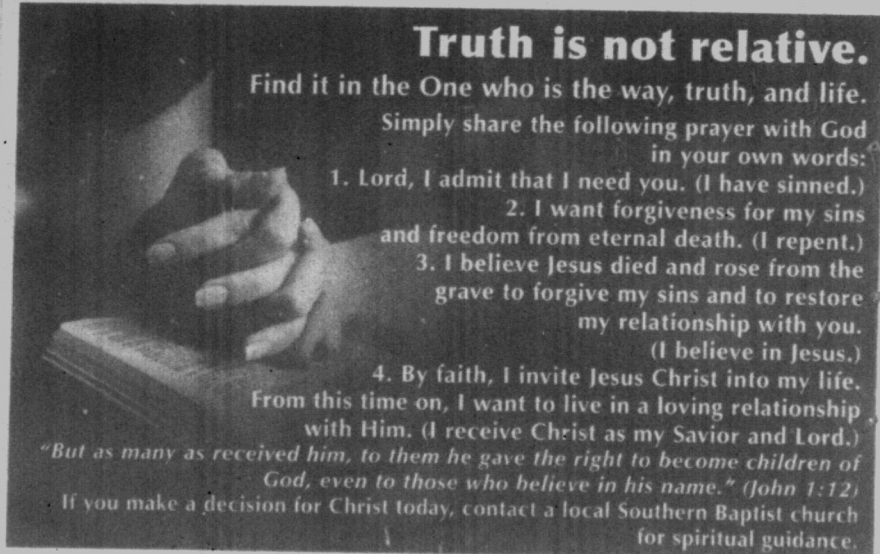
Simply share the following prayer with God in your own words:

1. Lord, I admit that I need you. (I have sinned.)
2. I want forgiveness for my sins and freedom from eternal death. (I repent.)
3. I believe Jesus died and rose from the grave to forgive my sins and to restore my relationship with you. (I believe in Jesus.)
4. By faith, I invite Jesus Christ into my life.

From this time on, I want to live in a loving relationship with Him. (I receive Christ as my Savior and Lord.)

"But as many as received him, to them he gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in his name." (John 1:12)

If you make a decision for Christ today, contact a local Southern Baptist church for spiritual guidance.



# THE VILLAGE VIEW



Sean A. Milner, Executive Director  
P.O. Box 27  
Clinton, MS 39060-0027  
(601) 922-2242  
www.baptistchildrensvillage.com

## GIFTS OF HONOR AND MEMORE

A portion of The Village View is allocated each month to a list of Gifts of Honor and Memory. Many groups and individuals elect to pay tribute to others through this sensitive, meaningful and helpful medium. This feature is hopefully designed to further honor, with taste and respect, those who are and will be a special part of our personal lives.

MAY 16-31

### HONORS

Ms. Kim Little Carpenter  
Mr. & Mrs. Rick Aveline, JT.  
Madeline & Gabe  
Patricia Duckworth  
Mr. & Mrs. Phil Duckworth  
Ms. Betty Kisner  
Michelle Kisner  
Martin and Beverly Taylor  
Mr. & Mrs. Gerald Daniel  
Ms. Brenda Nowell  
Natalie Scruggs  
Allen Nowell II  
The Robbins Family  
James P. Foley  
Mitzel Robbins  
Ms. Barbara Warren  
Lynn Warren  
Mrs. Senita W. Webb  
Rev. William B. Webb  
William B. Webb  
Mrs. Senita Webb

MAY 16-31

### MEMORIALS

Mrs. Brenda Adams  
Cypert Hill BC  
Rebecca Baldwin  
Dr. & Mrs. James H. May  
Mr. & Mrs. Tom Hill

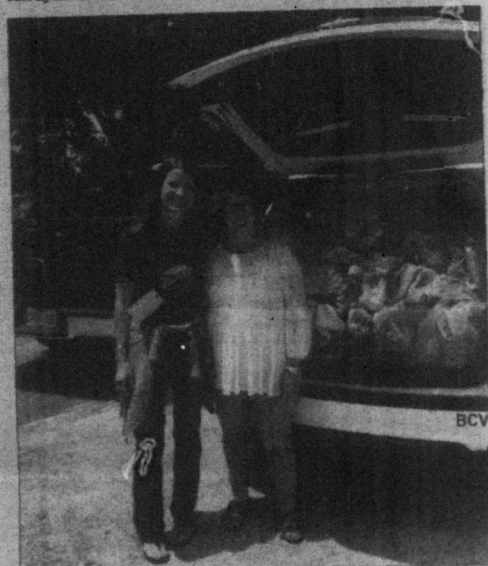
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Daniel, Christina & Donnie Osborne  
Mr. & Mrs. Lee Weiskopf  
Ms. Carol Berry  
Mr. & Mrs. Darren Clark  
Jay Burrell  
Mrs. Jo C. Freeman  
Cindy Butler  
Mr. & Mrs. Clyde Revette  
Jeremy Butler  
Ms. Vekeria Butler  
Jim Caraway  
Mr. & Mrs. Tom Hill  
J. R. Chaney  
Ms. Laverne G. Chaney  
Elaine Cooper  
Mr. & Mrs. Jerry May  
Rex C. Smart  
Mrs. Nell Cowart, Jill & Casey  
Mr. Aaron Crosby  
Mrs. Ann Lott Denton  
Mrs. Annette Haynes Crosby  
Mrs. Ann Lott Denton  
Mr. Neil Darby  
Mr. & Mrs. Lester Haddox  
Mrs. Sandra Gilliam  
Mr. & Mrs. D. L. Melton and Family  
Mr. Forest Goss  
Mr. & Mrs. Mark McCormick  
Ada Frances Halkford  
Dr. & Mrs. James H. May  
Mr. Phillip Lee Hammack  
Kokola Springs BC  
Elma Heffner

Mr. & Mrs. Jack G. Virden  
Mr. Robert Herrington Jr.  
Mr. & Mrs. Lester Haddox  
Billie Homod  
Mr. & Mrs. Jim Rushing  
John Charland Homod  
Mr. & Mrs. Jim Rushing  
John D. Homod  
Mr. & Mrs. Jim Rushing  
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Love & Loyalty SSC, Tylertown BC  
Mr. Jim Land  
Mr. & Mrs. Curtis A. Buchanan  
Mrs. Jane Layton  
Dr. & Mrs. Roy W. Daughdrill  
Ms. Glenna Faye Loskamp  
Ms. Mary B. Hyde  
J. Truman Manning  
Peggy Williams  
Mike & Olivia Martin  
Adult Men & Women TEL  
SSC, Springfield BC  
Mr. & Mrs. Carl R. Woolery  
Bonnie Mansfield  
Mr. & Mrs. D. L. Melton and Family  
Mr. Ray Martin  
Mr. & Mrs. Arthur Finkelberg  
Mildred Austin Mathis  
Mrs. Elizabeth B. Bapson  
Mrs. Mary Lee McArn  
Mr. & Mrs. Lester Haddox  
Dr. Connie S. McCaa  
Mrs. Edith M. Aldridge  
Mrs. Gladys McCrory

Mr. & Mrs. Charles Dew  
Douglas McFarland  
Eddleton BC  
Mrs. Lucile Mikell  
Miss Lucy Mikell  
Mrs. Joyce Miller  
Mr. & Mrs. Jimmie L. Manton  
Mr. Howard Mixon  
Mr. & Mrs. Charles Dew  
Mr. Henry Shelby  
Mrs. Shirley Hastings  
Mr. Lawrence Shelby  
Mrs. Shirley Hastings  
Evelyn Hays North  
Mr. & Mrs. Frank O. Crosthwait, Jr.  
Billy Nunnery  
Mrs. Wilda L. Butler  
Dorothy Neß Oberschmidt  
Mr. & Mrs. LaRue Baker  
Ms. Sylvia Parker  
Mr. Mark Scooby  
Ms. Rosemary Pearson  
Ms. Dinah Smith  
Ms. Karan Petersen  
Mr. & Mrs. Gene Fortenberry  
Doris Pezant  
Adult I SSC, Calvary BC  
Mrs. Cleo Pierce  
Mr. & Mrs. Jimmie L. Manton  
Mr. Billy Puckett  
Ms. Mary Lou Lott  
Mr. Edmond Ramshaw  
Mr. & Mrs. Jimmie L. Manton  
Mr. Bennie B. Robbins  
Mr. & Mrs. Richard Alligood  
Mrs. Emma Gene Robbins  
Mr. & Mrs. Jimmie L. Manton  
Ms. Katie Roberts  
Calvary BC

Sue Rouse  
Mr. & Mrs. Jerry May  
Mrs. Eric Rowley  
Mr. & Mrs. Lester Haddox  
Mrs. Rita Simmons  
Mr. & Mrs. Curtis A. Buchanan  
Mr. Glen Smith  
Casilla BC  
Mrs. Esther Sparks  
Mr. & Mrs. Charles Dew  
Marion Stapler  
Mr. & Mrs. Lester Robertson  
Mrs. Johnnie Stonestreet  
Mr. & Mrs. Jimmy Williamson  
Fred Strehle  
Mrs. Jo C. Freeman  
Mr. Walter Swain  
Mr. & Mrs. Curtis A. Buchanan  
Ms. Lyda Siddon Tavenner

Loree Newsom and Becky Avis  
Sandy Holman Taylor  
Mr. Billie J. Bonner  
Mr. & Mrs. Frank O. Crosthwait, Jr.  
Mrs. Vivian Thames  
Mrs. Ann Lott Denton  
Robert Tindall  
Cadaretta Water Assn BOD  
Mr. Roger Waldrop  
Mr. & Mrs. Robert L. Bradford  
Mrs. Brunell Walley  
Mr. & Mrs. Warren Strickland  
Ms. Mabel Moorehead Watts  
Mr. & Mrs. Herman L. Watts  
Mr. Sextus (Steve) Wilson  
Mr. & Mrs. Louis J. Dugas  
Barbara Winterstein  
Mr. & Mrs. Jerry May



Chrystelle Thames, BCV Public Relations Director accepts generous collection of cleaning and household supplies from Terri Pierce, VBS Mission teacher for **FBC WEST POINT**. Chrystelle shared about the needs of BCV children during the mission study time.

### Correction

APRIL MEMORIAL: Victor Morehead, FBC Pearl WOM



Pastor Jackie Spencer at **BARNES CROSSING BAPTIST CHURCH** celebrates another successful VBS and mission effort for The Baptist Children's Village.



Mrs. Helen Lyons, on behalf of **PARKWAY BAPTIST CHURCH, BILOXI** presents a check to Celeste Cade, BCV Public Relations Manager, to benefit The BCV Deanash Campus.



## The Shepherd • Psalm 23:1-6

Thanks to the eye black bravery of Tim Tebow, most everyone in this generation has read the red letter words of Jesus as recorded in John 3:16. Thanks to the inspiration of the Holy Spirit through the pen of King David resulting in six little verses in Psalm 23, the life of a sheep sounds protected, privileged and precious. As we agreed in week one, who doesn't love the Psalms? Moreover, who doesn't most especially love the Twenty-third Psalm? Many songs have been penned with Psalm 23 in mind. Fourteen years ago, I wrote a song entitled Psalm 23:2003. Many people have committed the verses of this Psalm to memory.

The first person to die in scripture was a shepherd named Abel. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and his twelve sons were all shepherds. Moses even did a little sheep-herding until he came across a burning bush and ended up herding hard-headed, cold-hearted, stiff-necked Israelites through 40 years of wilderness wandering. God sent priests and judges and prophets and kings to shepherd His people throughout the Old Testament. Last of all, He sent His only begotten Son to be the lamb and the shepherd.

The shepherd/sheep relationship is a major theme throughout scripture. Jesus built on that theme in John 10. The sheep hear the voice of their own shepherd. Intimately, he calls them by name. Provisionally, he leads them out of the fold to pasture each day. Protectively, he goes before them. Ultimately, the good shepherd is willing to lay down his life for his flock. Jesus

came to do exactly that. He is called the Good Shepherd in John 10. He is called the Great Shepherd in Hebrews 13. He is called the Shepherd and Bishop of our Souls in 1 Peter 2. In Matthew 2, we read that Jesus was the One sent to "shepherd my people, Israel" as he quotes from the prophecy recorded in Micah 5:2-5. Jesus is the innocent, holy lamb of God sent to take away the sins of the world. One day He will seat His own at the marriage supper of the lamb.

Not only does David give us a clear picture of the shepherd and the sheep,

he also describes the trail guide and the trail trekker and the banquet host and the table guest. In six short verses, we see that we have everything we need for each day's journey. God provides. The picture here is of complete renewal, refreshment and restoration. God directs. There is a right path. The name and reputation of the shepherd is at stake as he chooses the right path.

As the shepherd is honored and revered, the sheep also prosper.

There is a valley of the shadow of death and deep darkness

and testing. The sheep walk through this valley knowing that they are also surrounded by mountains of protection. There is a shadow, but even in that dark foreboding place, there is abiding confidence of the certainty of the presence of light creating that shadow.

The ministry of presence is the dear-est of all. Pastures green or brown, waters still or rushing, paths through

shadow or shine; the shepherd is present. He is the gift. Being near to him brings ultimate and immediate peace. The ministry of presence cancels out fear. Tools used to battle enemies and predators become tools of endearment to the sheep. Sheep fall and are unable to right themselves. Death is the result. The shepherd's staff can pull them out of the crevasse and get them on their feet again. The rod that is used to strike the lion and the bear can also wound the leg of a wayward sheep to keep it close to the fold. As the leg heals, the shepherd will even be known to carry the sheep.

One of my favorite Hebrew words is found in the closing verses. Surely goodness and mercy shall "follow" me all the days of my life. The word for "follow" means literally to chase with the intention of overtaking as a dog in a hunt. Surely goodness and mercy shall chase me with the intention of overtaking me as a dog in a hunt. Show me the brown pasture. Show me the rushing stream. Show me the valley of the shadow. Bring on the enemies. My shepherd knows me. I know Him. What/Who else do I need?

Brown is staff evangelist, First Church, Richland.



### Explore the Bible

with Becky Brown

## Respect Authority • 1 Samuel 24:3-12

Live like someone has died for you. This is a mantra that I have shared many times. From my family to pulpits to writing, these words are meant to anchor my heart to the fact that as a Christian I am to be different in all ways of living. Peter refers to such living a holy conduct (1 Peter 1:15). Personally, my holy conduct is easy to live out when it is expected. I behave correctly when in the company of those I agree with. My words are soft when the topic is to my liking. However, my holy conduct can turn to something ugly when a topic or person with which I am at odds arises.

David felt such turmoil in this text as he was unjustly persecuted by King Saul. David was an innocent man on the run from a vicious ruler. His running had led him to hiding out as an outlaw in a cave. In a move of sovereign coincidence, David's pursuer happens upon his hideout cave to use as a rest area. Now is David's opportunity to display either holy conduct or selfish intent towards one whom can be viewed as an enemy. He can behave properly towards Israel's king or follow the urging of his troops and enact vengeance (vs. 4). He chooses to do the former.

### With private respect

David's men are being hunted down by the same savage king. They too are tired of hiding and desire to return home. In their minds now is the opportune time for David to seize the throne by taking out the present king. They even use scripture to make their point in vs. 4. It was obvious to these men that God had placed Saul within striking distance and had even given David permission to do to Saul "what seemed good to him."

Yet David knew the scriptures too. He knew that even though Saul was being as a bad king, he was still Israel's ruler and this was an office to which no one was elected. God had anointed Saul as king and to be God's anointed one meant a special favor from God's own hand was on Saul, whether he was good or bad. To harm Saul was to harm the one that God had placed on the throne. This respect was displayed in private. Saul is within arm's reach

yet he is oblivious to this conversation. David gave his leader respect even when it was behind the leader's back. That is true respect.

### With public respect

David would have been wise to simply stay put in the cave. Saul would have been none the wiser and David would have escaped. Yet the outlaw comes into the sunlight and announces his aim of safety towards King Saul.

The understanding that Saul was the anointed one from God to lead Israel was never far from David's thoughts.

He had privately shown Saul respect and now he was outside for all to hear his peaceful intentions.

Even in disagreement and persecution David showed his leader grace. David had an opportunity to take the king's life and yet we are told that he bowed low to pay respect. As Saul had laid his robe aside in the cave and David had cut a portion off. In vs. 11 we

see that David even refers to the king as "father." What respect for God's ruler. What an example for us to follow.

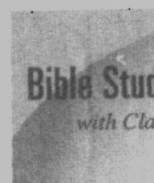
### With public trust in God

Yes, Saul had acted in an ungodly manner. No, he not acted in a manner worthy of respect. David had already proven that he would not take matters into his own hands. Now to close out this scene he let all his hearers know that the whole of his defense would be tested by God alone. Saul was the Lord's anointed one so any avenging to be done would not be handled personally.

Romans 13:1 teaches that we are to respect those in government. This truth carries over to non-government leaders as well. It is the epitome of Christian maturity to submit to, pray for and respect leaders whom we might not see eye to eye with and more so for those who we know are leading contrary to God's word.

It may be an employer. It may be an unbelieving parent or teacher. At some point, we are sure to be placed under the leadership of ungodly people. For those people, we are to pray and represent our King.

Anthony is director of the Collaborative Missionary Network, Oxford/Holly Springs.

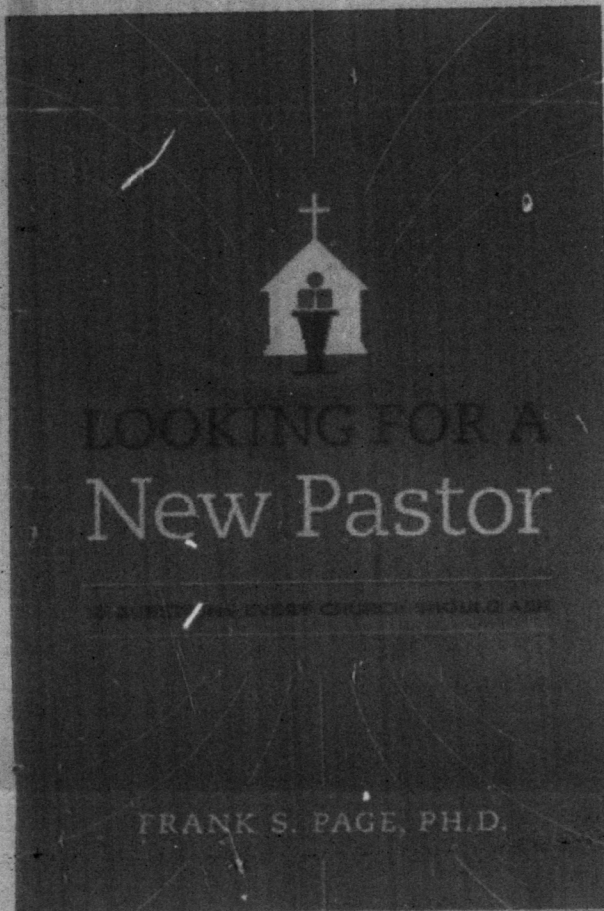


### Bible Studies for Life

with Clay Anthony



# Helpful! hints for pastor searches available now



NASHVILLE (BP and local reports) — Frank Page, president of the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee in Nashville, has released a new guidebook entitled, *Looking for a New Pastor* as the title of his new guidebook. Released June 1 by B&H Publishing, an imprint of LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC), the guidebook shares biblical instruction and practical insights gleaned from Page's 34 years in the pastorate and his ongoing denominational service.

"I was inspired to write this book out of a deep sense of need. Having been a pastor a long time and now helping churches across our convention, I found that many churches, if not most, struggle when it comes to finding a new pastor," Page told Baptist Press (BP).

"In almost every situation, laypersons are charged with seeking a new pastor and many of them are unprepared to ask the right questions. Thus the subtitle of the book, *10 Questions Every Church Should Ask*."

Page designed the book for laypersons who serve on pastoral search teams as well as pastors seeking new posts.

Thousands of senior pastors resign from their jobs in the U.S. each year, Page said, leaving about 10% of churches with the task of hir-

"I was inspired to write this book out of a deep sense of need. Having been a pastor a long time and now helping churches across our convention, I found that many churches, if not most, struggle when it comes to finding a new pastor."



Frank Page

president of the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee

ing a new leader. Making sure pastors and churches are well suited for one another and communicating needs and expectations clearly during the search process can often make the difference in a pastor's length of service, he pointed out.

"The pitfalls which churches often encounter are many and varied," Page told BP. "Often the 'vetting' process is weak and this leads to difficult and sometimes disastrous situations. In the book, I help churches learn how to truly discover the DNA of their own church as they also discover the true DNA of the pastoral candidate."

Page reveals such insights as 10 things a pastor wishes the search committee had revealed, 10 things churches wish their former pastor had told them, and 10 things the candidate will not tell the committee. Included is advice on getting started in the pastoral search, strategies to avoid,

deciding what to look for in a senior pastor, and questions to ask during interviews.

"I believe church leaders can learn a great deal from reading the book because I share real life examples of things to watch for, warning signs of which to be aware, and successes and failures which are often replicated across the nation," Page said.

"It is a highly practical book which deals with the struggles that most search committees and churches deal with."

Page pastored Taylors First Church in Taylor, S.C., and churches in Georgia, North Carolina, and Texas before his 2010 election to lead the SBC Executive Committee. He was SBC president from 2006-2008, and has pastored several congregations on an interim basis including First Church, Jackson.

Page's book is available at LifeWay Christian Book Stores and other top retail outlets.

## First Person: Giving all for missions is worth it

By Chad Keck  
Correspondent

One of my first memories of missions was when I was only three and my dad went with a short-term mission team to Guatemala in March 1978 following a massive earthquake there.

He was part of our church's second team that went to help Guatemalans after that tragedy. The first team worked alongside our Foreign Mission Board (now International Mission Board) missionaries to rebuild Damascus Church in Guatemala City.

The second team went to the village of Santo Domingo Xenaco outside Guatemala City to help those who lost family members and homes in the earthquake. Following a hard day of construction, the team would gather for



KECK

evening worship when they would share the Gospel with locals.

Obviously, being three years of age I do not remember much about my dad being gone except what happened to him upon his return and how it impacted our family and my life.

My dad became very sick not long after coming back, and we soon discovered that he had contracted an infectious form of Hepatitis A from the drinking water in Guatemala.

Even as a young child I remember being extremely concerned over his health. It was scary to have your father home from a long trip and him not to be able to get out of bed, or for you not to be able to spend time around him.

As I reflect on that years later, I am struck by the fact that I never heard my father complain about getting sick nor have I ever heard him talk poorly about his mission trip experience. Perhaps the most amazing thing is that it never slowed him down

from taking more trips. He is now age 71 and still actively engaged in international missions trips every year.

Not only did his active participation in missions make a lasting impression on me, but the commitment he and my mother had to financially support missions did as well. I remember them giving joyfully and talking often about the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for Overseas Missions (now International Missions) and the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for Home Missions (now North American Missions).

I remember them sharing stories about missionaries they had met while serving and why giving sacrificially was so important to them. As they would share these stories, my mind would often drift back to my father's illness. I would quietly wonder why someone would give a week of vacation, get extremely sick, and yet still be passionate about sacrificially giving through these missions offerings as well

as the Cooperative Program that also supports Southern Baptist national and international missions.

It would not be until I stepped off a plane in Namibia, Africa, as a 21-year-old on my first international mission trip that I would understand what my dad knew in 1978 about the joy of living and giving to the Great Commission.

The joy I discovered in Namibia was the same joy that my parents had modeled for me throughout their lives, through their faithful and consistent giving to their local church. Each Sunday, a portion of their giving would go to fund missions in their state and around the world through the Cooperative Program.

Now that I am a pastor and a dad, I am trying to model this same faithfulness. I want my kids and my church to see me going into the world, loving others, and sharing the Gospel. I want my kids and church to see me sacrifice my time, talent, and treasure for the cause of Christ.

I want them to know there is something more important than safety, than health, than wealth, than the American dream.

I want them to see that we can accomplish more for the Kingdom together as Southern Baptists than we can alone, and that is why I believe the Cooperative Program is the best way we have to accomplish this task.

It has been said that more is caught than taught, and while I'm not promoting anyone catching an infectious disease, I am suggesting that we as parents and pastors can model what it means to cooperate for the sake of the cause.

Keck is senior pastor of First Church, Kettering, Ohio, and the Cooperative Program catalyst for the Midwest with the SBC Executive Committee. He was the 2015-2016 second vice president of the SBC. His commentary appears courtesy of Baptist Press. Edited for style.